

## PSYCHOEDUCATION OUTLINE

When a serious mental illness strikes, as in all serious illnesses, the family needs information about the illness, about treatments, side affects of treatment, and coping skills for everyone involved. This 12 week course is designed to do that.

The classes will cover what is known (and not known) about serious mental illnesses (SMI); helpful coping skills for various behaviors; what seems to help people with a SMI, what can help the rest of the family, and how you can survive all the stress.

The basic components of Psychoeducation are:

- 1) Education
- 2) Joining together with other families
- 3) Problem solving, management and coping skills for all concerned
- 4) Connecting with needed services

We will spend time checking in with each other; about 3/4 hr. on content about SMI's and half an hour on sharing coping strategies.

### SCHEDULE

- Week 1      Getting acquainted  
Describing your particular situation with SMI in the family
- Week 2      Exploring with each family:
- What they went through at psychotic break
  - What they understand as the causes of SMI
  - Explore their family and social networks; survival resources (write these down at home)
- Week 3      Information about the etiology, course and outcomes of the Affective Disorder:
- Biochemical theories
  - Genetic theories
  - Sociocultural theories
  - The experiences of Affective Disorders
- Treatments for Affective Disorders
- The use of medication: how it works, why it works, why it is needed, side effects
  - Other treatments: social skills training, day treatment, vocational rehab, psychotherapy . . .
  - Management of the illness
- Week 4      The family and Affective Disorders:
- The needs of the patient
  - The needs of the family
  - Family reactions
  - Family guidelines for survival
  - Keeping hope alive for all concerned
  - Sharing of various coping skills

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- Week 5 Information about the etiology, course, and outcomes of the Schizophrenias:
- Biochemical theories
  - Genetic theories
  - Sociocultural theories
  - The experiences of Schizophrenia: positive, negative, cognitive
- Treatments for Schizophrenias
- The use of medication: how it works, why it is needed, side effects
  - Other treatments: social skills training, day treatment, vocational rehab, cognitive behavior . . .
  - Management of the illness
- Week 6 The Family and Schizophrenia:
- The needs of the patient
  - The needs of the family
  - Family reactions
  - Family guidelines for survival
  - Keeping hope alive for all concerned
- Week 7 The Personality Disorders: Information, Family, and Survival Strategies for Personality Disorders
- Week 8 The role of stress in precipitating episodes
- Early signs of relapse
  - Basic components of SMI:
- Week 9 General prognosis of the different illnesses. What is not known about these many SMI's.
- Week 10 Families
- The unending process of adaptation. Where are you in this process?
  - Coping modalities
  - Is advocacy for you?
  - Referral to NAMI
- Week 11 Family Issues, cont.
- Education to reduce guilt, over-responsibility, confusion, and helplessness of family
  - Enable family members to be less judgmental and critical, and less invested in notions that they caused or can cure the illness
  - Issues of control and accountability
  - Family obligations to themselves
- Week 12 Family Input  
Summary